

From: Michael K. Harrison
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 12/8/01 3:58am
Subject: Harsher penalties are needed!

To whom it may concern,

I just wanted to express my concern that the proposed settlement does not do enough to eliminate the monopolistic practices of Microsoft or promote more competition. Knowing that your time is valuable I will try to keep this short and brief. I recently started to experiment with linux in an effort to make sure I was not held hostage to paying yearly subscription fees to use my computer. I fear that Microsoft in the near future will resort to annual licenses even to the operating system so that it can maintain consistent revenue. Well in my experiment I tried to access one of my favorite sites www.cnbc.com. I love and use the personalized stock ticker on that site nearly everyday. It was only then that I realized that I was unable to run that feature using Netscape. I would have to use Internet Explorer. I then realized that I can't get Internet Explorer for any other operating system besides Windows. Finally I noticed that CNBC and ESPN (another one of my favorite sites) had recently become affiliated with MSN.

It is because of this experience that I don't feel the proposed settlement is adequate. Even if you force them to allow vendors to place other competing products like Netscape on the Windows OS, I would probably still need to use Internet Explorer to get the full benefits of the websites affiliated with MSN. If I need to use Internet Explorer to get the full benefit of my favorite site, why would I install a competing browser? To view sites that aren't affiliated with MSN? I may be wrong but it seems to me the possibility of Microsoft influencing the content of websites to dictate which browser and operating system I use exists. I contend that it is an abuse of monopolistic power and is currently in practice. Your proposal does nothing to eliminate this practice.

I suggest that in addition to your proposed settlement, Microsoft has to open up the web sites it controls, owns or influences to most competing products. Only then will competitors become viable options. Internet Explorer will then truly be competing on it's merits versus being the only option available. Unless this step is taken, I'm afraid Microsoft's monopoly will only grow larger and stronger while competition and innovation become non-existent.

Sincerely,

Michael Harrison
harriso@yahoo.com

